Howell and Ozark County Towersites

West Plains Towersite
Mountain View Towersite
Tecumseh Towersite
Brandsville Towersite
Timber Knob Towersite

Fifteen Year Area Management Plan
FY 2015-2030

Lisa D. Allen _____
Forestry Division Chief

7-8-15
Date

Howell and Ozark County Towersites Management Plan Approval Page

PLANNING TEAM

Audrey Beres, Resource Forester

Mary Scott, Fisheries Management Biologist

AJ Pratt, Fisheries Management Biologist

Justin Gailey, Wildlife Management Biologist
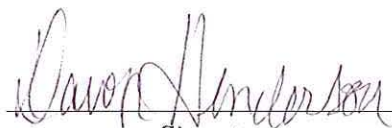
Jerry Kiger, Conservation Agent
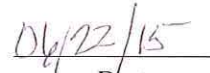
Tom Leeker, Conservation Agent

Marcus Asher, Private Land Conservationist

Stephanie McKinney, Conservation Education Consultant

OZARK REGION

Ozark RCT Chair   _____ _____
                              Signature   *Date*

FORESTRY DIVISION

Unit Chief   _____ _____
                              Signature   *Date*

OVERVIEW

Area Name	Area Number	Date Acquired	Acreage	County	Administrative Responsibility	Maintenance Responsibility
West Plains Towersite	5523	1955	2	Howell	Forestry	Forestry
Mountain View Towersite	4804	1948	27	Howell	Forestry	Forestry
Tecumseh Towersite	5307	1953	40	Ozark	Forestry	Forestry
Brandsville Towersite	5910	1959	6	Howell	Forestry	Forestry
Timber Knob Towersite	5105	1951	40	Ozark	Forestry	Forestry

Statements of Purpose:

A. Strategic Direction

Towersites are used for emergency communications and fire detection purposes.

1) West Plains Towersite has three Missouri Department of Conservation (Department) and Howell County 911 radio relays and is currently used for fire detection by Department staff.
2) Mountain View Towersite has two Department radio relays and is currently used for fire detection by Department staff.
3) Tecumseh Towersite is currently used for fire detection by Department staff.
4) Brandsville Towersite has Garnett Wood Products, Howell County 911 and Brandsville Fire Protection Association radio relays. It is not currently used for fire detection.
5) Timber Knob Towersite has a new self-supported tower. It supports radio relays for the Department, White River Valley Electric Coop and Ozark County Mutual Aide. It is currently used for fire detection by Department staff.

B. Desired Future Condition

Maintain structural integrity of these towers to ensure safety of Department fire lookout personnel. Manage surrounding forests to ensure healthy, sustainable forest resources.

C. Federal Aid Statement

N/A

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

I.   Special Considerations

Area Name	Priority Area	Natural Area
West Plains Towersite	Tingler Uplands Terrestrial Conservation Opportunity Area (COA), Priority Forest Landscape	None
Mountain View Towersite	Priority Forest Landscape	None
Tecumseh Towersite	Bridges Creek Aquatic COA, Priority Forest Landscape	None
Brandsville Towersite	None	None
Timber Knob Towersite	None	None

II.   Important Natural Features and Resources

Area Name	Species of Conservation Concern	Caves	Springs
West Plains Towersite	None observed	None	None
Mountain View Towersite	None observed	None	None
Tecumseh Towersite	None observed	None	None
Brandsville Towersite	None observed	None	None
Timber Knob Towersite	None observed	None	None

III.   Existing Infrastructure

Area Name	Parking Areas	Other
West Plains Towersite	1	1 fire tower, relay equipment
Mountain View Towersite	1	1 fire tower, relay equipment
Tecumseh Towersite	None	1 fire tower, relay equipment[1]
Brandsville Towersite	1	1 fire tower, relay equipment[2]
Timber Knob Towersite	1	1 fire tower, 1 relay tower with equipment, repeater sheds[1,2]

[1]Access road is closed to vehicles when tower is not manned.

[2]Towers and equipment are leased.

IV.   Area Restrictions or Limitations

Area Name	Deed Restric- tions	Federal Interest	Easements	Cultural Resources	Hazards	Endangered Species	Boundary Issues
West Plains Towersite	None	Yes[1]	None	Yes[2]	None	None	None
Mountain View Towersite	None	Yes[1]	None	None Known	None	None	None
Tecumseh Towersite	None	Yes[1]	None	Yes[2]	None	None	None
Brandsville Towersite	None	Yes[1]	None	Yes[2]	None	None	None
Timber Knob Towersite	None	Yes[1]	None	Yes[2]	None	None	None

[1]Federal funds may be used in the management of this land. Fish and wildlife agencies may not allow recreational activities and related facilities that would interfere with the purpose for which the State is managing the land. Other uses may be acceptable and must be assessed in each specific situation.

[2]The West Plains, Tecumseh, Brandsville and Timber Knob towersistes are likely eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Records kept with the Department Environmental Compliance Specialist. Managers should follow Best Management Practices for Cultural Resources found in the Department Resource Policy Manual.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

V.   <u>Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations</u>

Challenges and Opportunities:
Limited tract size prevents substantial habitat management on the towersites.

Management Objective 1: Maintain existing terrestrial resources on the towersites with minimal personnel time.
Strategy 1: Address forest health, fire and exotic invasive species issues, as needed. (Forestry)

VI.   **Public Use Management Considerations**

Challenges and Opportunities:
Maintain public access for hunting on tower sites where public use is permitted. Mountain View, Tecumseh and Timber Knob Towersites are open to the public and permit hunting.

Management Objective 1: Maintain hunting access on Mountain View, Tecumseh and Timber Knob Towersites.
Strategy 1: Maintain roads and boundaries where appropriate. (Forestry, Design and Development)

VII.   **Administrative Considerations**

Challenges and Opportunities:
Protect employee and public safety.

Management Objective 1: Maintain towersites to provide safe fire detection during times of high fire danger.
Strategy 1: Mow, trim and apply appropriate herbicides to maintain a safe environment and full access by Department personnel. (Forestry)
Strategy 2: Maintain and repair structures, as needed, and keep structures closed to the public to ensure the safety of Department personnel and the public; and to protect tower equipment. (Forestry, Design Development, Information Technology)

Management Objective 2: Maintain leases on towers and equipment located on towersites.
Strategy 1: Maintain leases on Brandsville and Timber Knob Towersites to ensure conditions are met. (Administrative Services)

Lands Proposed for Disposal:
Towersites without infrastructure, unsafe towers, or towers that are no longer necessary for emergency communications or fire detection may be considered for disposal.

MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE

All strategies are considered ongoing.

APPENDICES

Maps:
Appendix 1. West Plains Towersite Background
Appendix 2. West Plains Towersite Map
Appendix 3. Mountain View Towersite Background
Appendix 4. Mountain View Towersite Map
Appendix 5. Tecumseh Towersite Background
Appendix 6. Tecumseh Towersite Map
Appendix 7. Brandsville Towersite Background
Appendix 8. Brandsville Towersite Map
Appendix 9. Timber Knob Towersite Background
Appendix 10. Timber Knob Towersite Map
Appendix 11: Draft Howell and Ozark County Towersites Area Management Plan Public Comments

Public Input Summary:
The draft Howell and Ozark County Towersites Area Management Plan was available for a public comment period February 1–28, 2015. The Missouri Department of Conservation received comments from two respondents (Appendix 11). The Howell and Ozark County Towersites Area Planning Team carefully reviewed and considered these ideas as they finalized this document. A brief summary of public input themes, including how they were incorporated or why they were not, can be found below. Rather than respond to each individual comment, comments are grouped into general themes and are addressed collectively.

Department responses to themes and issues identified through Howell and Ozark County Towersites public comment period

Appreciates the Department maintaining fire towers and protecting them from vandalism.
As stated in Administrative Considerations, Management Objective 1, Strategies 1 and 2 maintenance of our fire towers is a priority. A functioning tower for fire detection and safe environment for our employees and the public is very important.

Expresses personal interest in acquiring and relocating fire towers that may be considered for disposal.
If fire towers become unsafe, require constant maintenance, or are deemed unnecessary they will disposed of. The disposal will be advertised in the local newspaper and towers will be sold by sealed bid.

Concerned about fluctuation in local wildlife populations (coyote, turkey, rabbit, bobcat).
The Missouri of Department of Conservation has relocated and reintroduced wildlife in the past such as turkeys, otters, and elk. Coyotes have never been reintroduced in Missouri. Wildlife populations are cyclical and have highs and lows due to many factors such as habitat, weather, predators, and disease. If you would like to know more about local factors contributing to these fluctuations or how to improve wildlife habitat on your property, contact your local Missouri Department of Conservation office.

Appendix 1. West Plains Towersite Background

Area is not open to the public. The tower is used by local staff for fire detection.
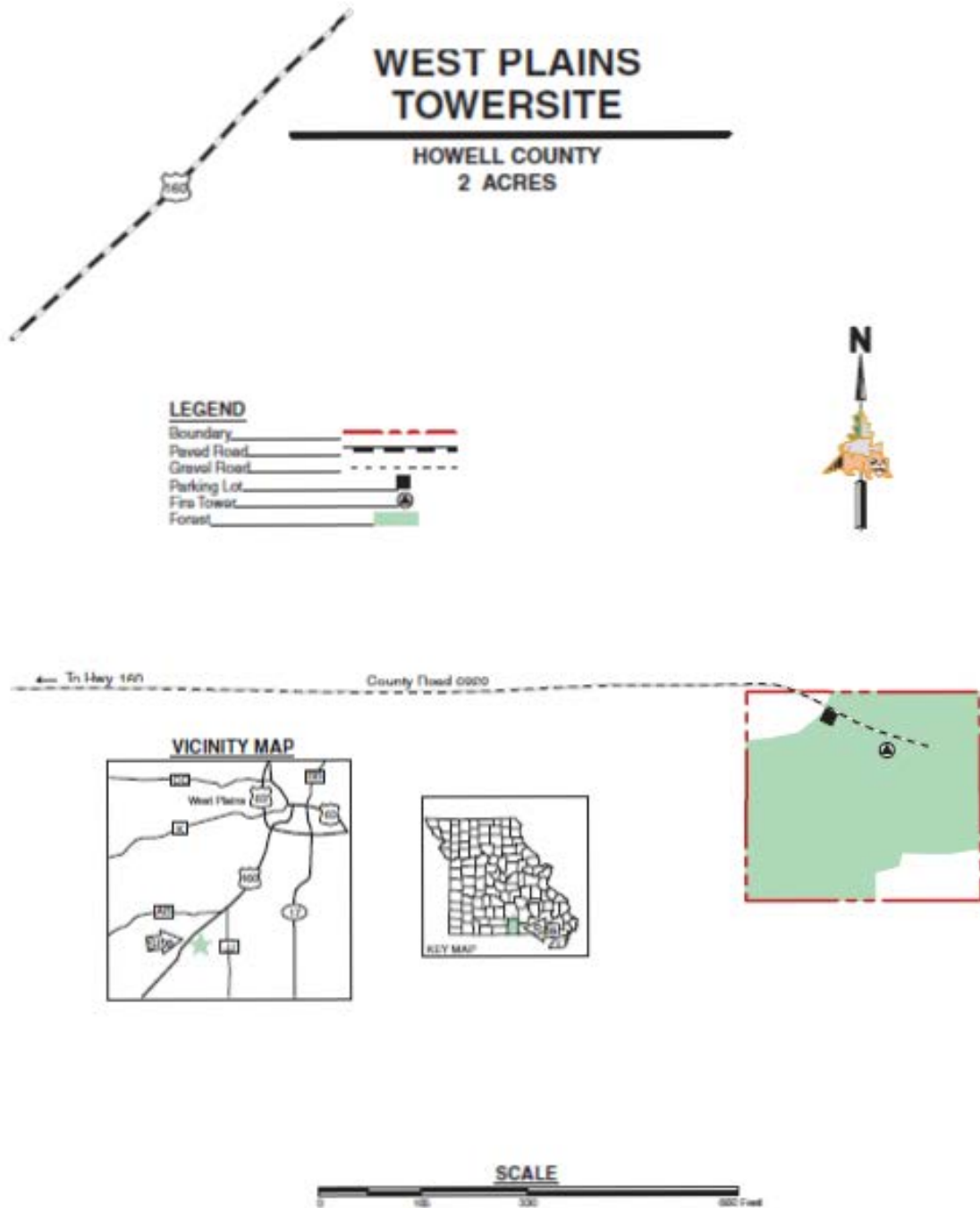
Legal Description: Township 29 North, Range 11 West, Section 33.

Area Location: West Plains Towersite is 5 miles west of West Plains on Highway 160 and 0.25 miles east on County Road 6920.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	% of Area
Forest	2	100
Total	**2**	**100**

Appendix 2. West Plains Towersite Map

WEST PLAINS TOWERSITE

HOWELL COUNTY
2 ACRES

LEGEND
Boundary
Paved Road
Gravel Road
Parking Lot
Fire Tower
Forest

N

VICINITY MAP

West Plains

KEY MAP

County Road 0920

To Hwy 160

SCALE

Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri © 11/07

Appendix 3. Mountain View Towersite Background

The towersite is open to the public, but the access road is closed to vehicles when the tower is not manned.
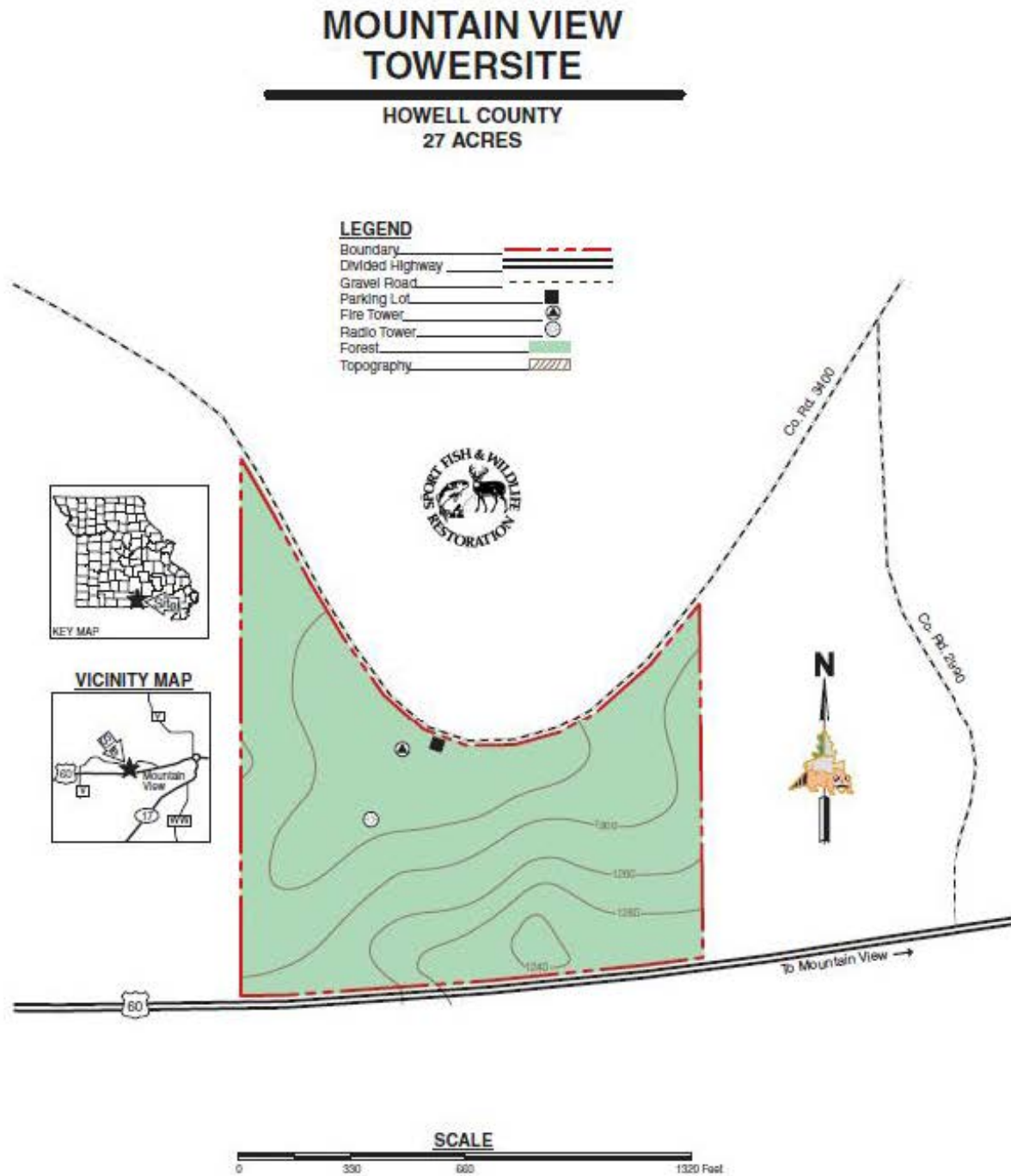
Legal Description: Township 27 North, Range 7 West, Section 19.

Area Location: The Mountain View Towersite is located 1.5 miles west of Mountain View on Highway 60. Go 0.5 miles north on County Road 2990 to junction of County Road 3400. Then go 0.25 miles west on County Road 3400.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	% of Area
Forest	22	100
Total	**22**	**100**

Appendix 4. Mountain View Towersite Map

MOUNTAIN VIEW TOWERSITE

HOWELL COUNTY
27 ACRES

Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri © 06/13

Appendix 5. Tecumseh Towersite Background

The towersite is open to the public, but the access road is closed to vehicles when the tower is not manned.

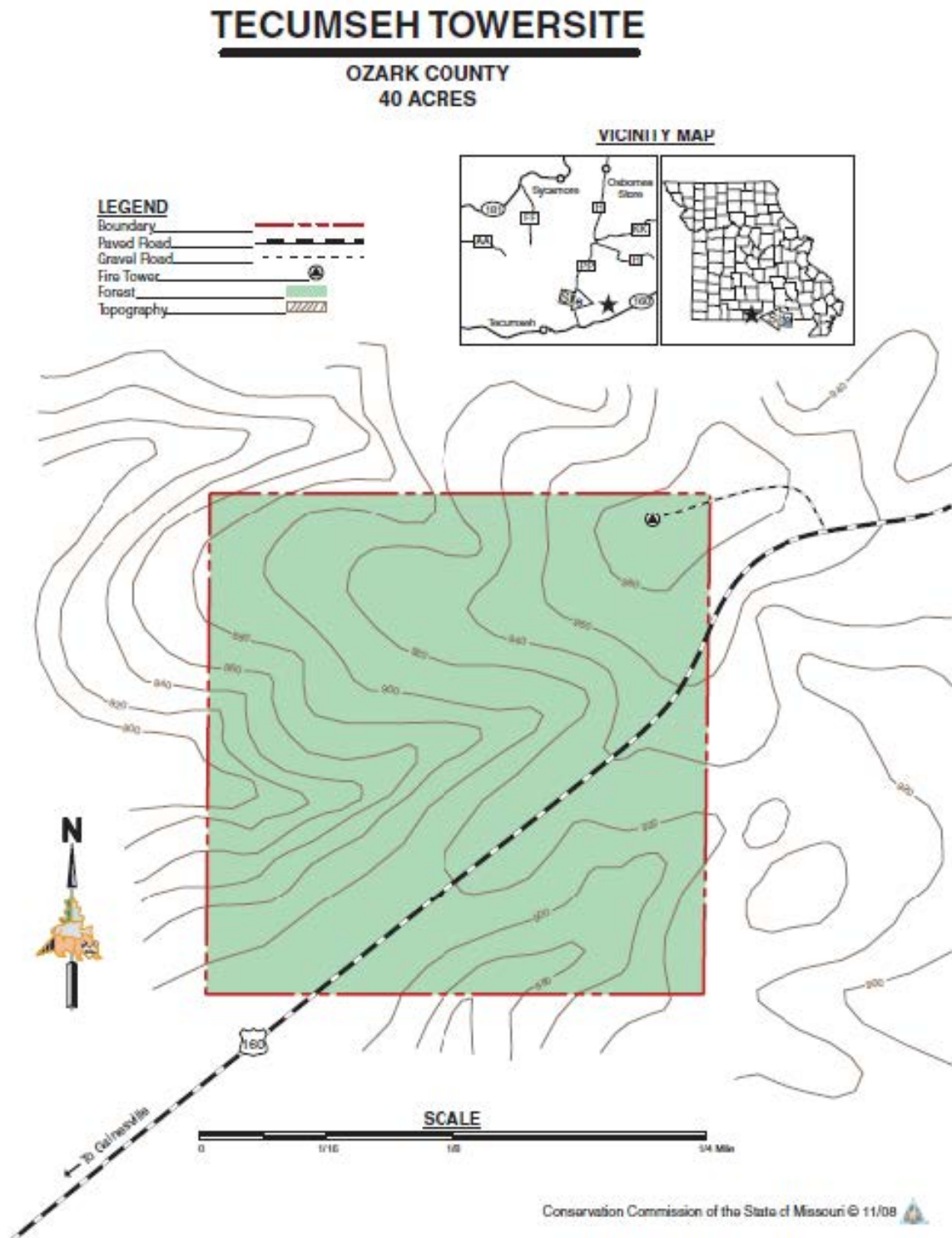Legal Description: Township 22 North, Range 12 West, Section 12.

Area Location: Tecumseh Towersite is 10 miles east of Gainesville on Highway 160.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	% of Area
Forest	40	100
Total	**40**	**100**

Appendix 6. Tecumseh Towersite Map

Appendix 7. Brandsville Towersite Background
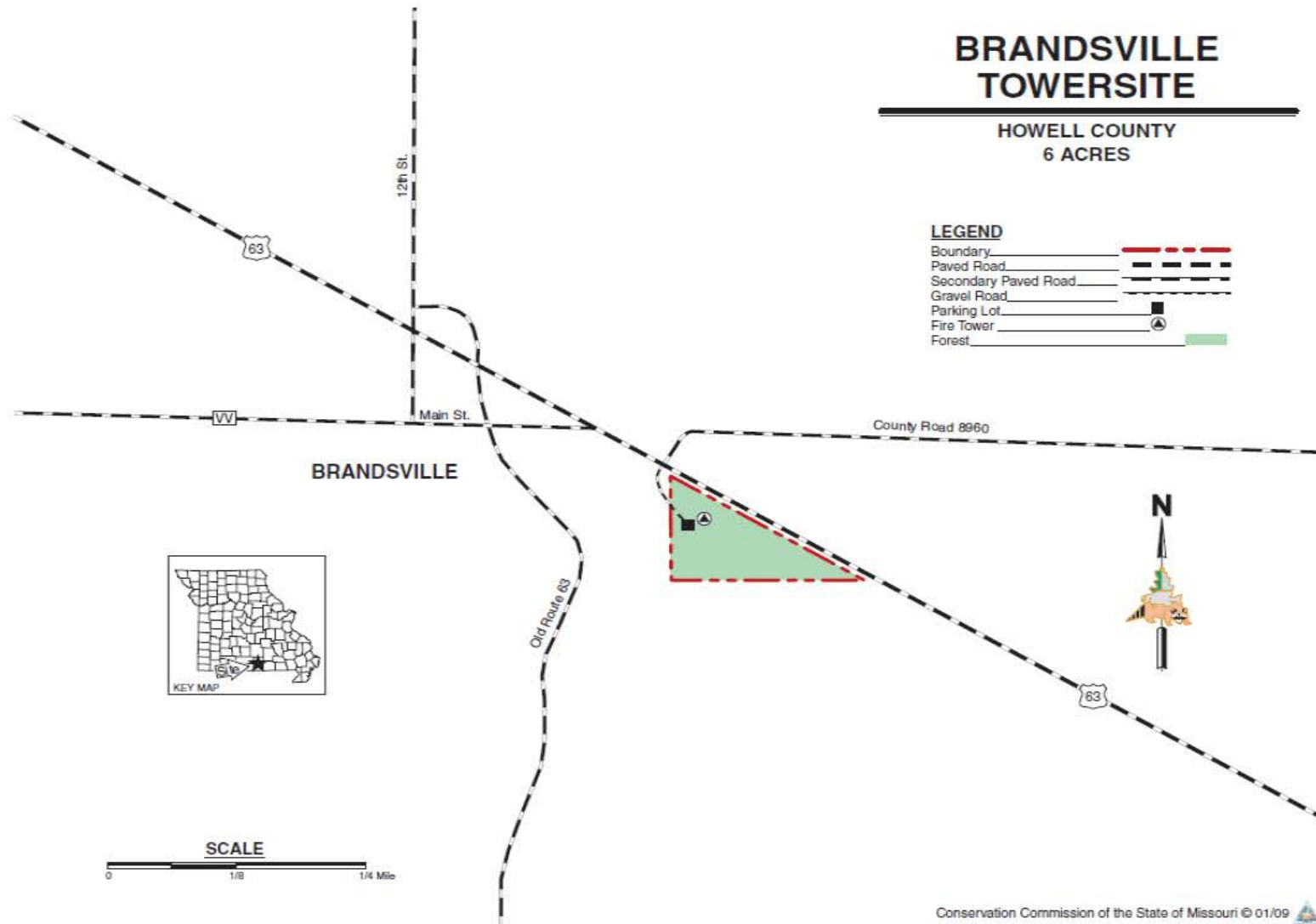
The towersite is not open to the public.

Legal Description: Township 23 North, Range 7 West, Section 24.

Area Location: Brandsville Towersite is located 10 miles south of West Plains on Highway 63.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	% of Area
Forest	6	100
Total	**6**	**100**

Appendix 8. Brandsville Towersite Map

Appendix 9. Timber Knob Towersite Background

The towersite is open to the public, but the access road is closed to vehicles when the tower is not manned.
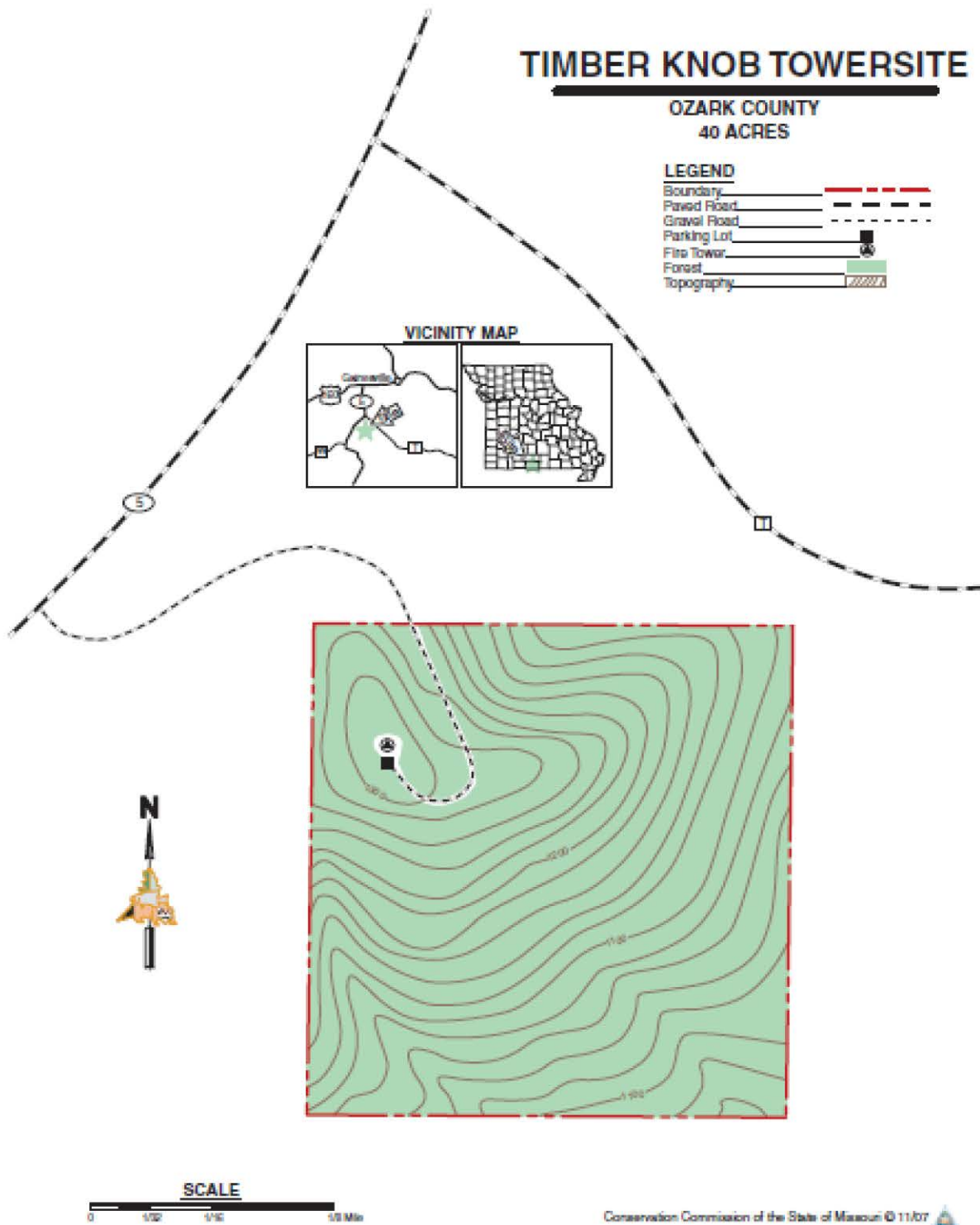
Legal Description: Township 22 North, Range 14 West, Section 23.

Area Location: Timber Knob Towersite is 2.25 miles south of Gainesville on Highway 5.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	% of Area
Forest	40	100
Total	**40**	**100**

Appendix 10. Timber Knob Towersite Map

Appendix 11. Howell and Ozark County Towersites Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (February 1-28, 2015)

Thanks so much for continuing to maintain these tower sites. These are important historical landmarks and pieces of history to teach not only about fire prevention (and its history) but also the goals of conservation here in our great state. I'm happy to see in the report that these sites are to be continued to be maintained and also steps taken to protect them from vandalism. I also noticed a few lines that mentioned that unsafe towers, towers without infrastructure would be disposed of. If any towers are to be resigned to this fate, I would encourage you to offer these to individuals for the sake of preserving them in some fashion. For example, if a tower were to be disposed of, I would love to approach my town (Pleasant Hill) in relocating the tower, in some fashion (if the tower is mostly unsafe, possibly just the cab and top section, etc.) for a type of display that would highlight the importance of these pieces of history and conservation. I would be highly interested in any tower that was to be disposed of. Please feel free to contact me at:

Keep up the good work and thanks again for maintaining these important pieces of history and conservation!

It appears to me that coyotes have been introduced in the past. This increase in the coyote population resulted in a significant drop in the turkey and rabbit populations. Then I stumbled on a bobcat. I have inadvertently added rabbit habitat. I actually saw 4 turkeys a couple of months ago. The first time in years. Who should I contact about these fluctuations? We would like a stable balance.

Thanks.